

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether gross borrowings under external commercial borrowings were 3.9% but the allocation to the shipping industry was less than 4% during 1995-96;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the shipping sector is no longer getting adequate support from the Government in raising their funds either by way of direct loans or guarantees;

(f) if so, whether any final decision for foreign exchange funds for the shipping sector has been taken; and

(g) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Approval under External Commercial Borrowings to the Shipping Sector during the last 3 years are as under;

Year	Amount (in USD Million)
1995-96	105.404
1996-97	145.880
1997-98	83.120 (upto 30.6.97)

(e) No, Sir.

(f) and (g) Does not arise.

#### Investment of Indian Corporates in Abroad

1640. SHRI PRABHU DAYAL KATHERIA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have recently liberalised the norms governing Indian Corporates investments abroad;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the benefits likely to accrue to our country as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In addition to the existing fast track route under which the RBI issues approvals for proposals of Overseas Investments upto US \$ 4 Million on the basis of export track record, Govt. have introduced two new fast track routes for Overseas Investments in Joint ventures and wholly owned subsidiaries abroad by Indian Companies where the investment is funded out of Exchange Earner's Foreign Currency (EEFC) Account upto a maximum of US \$ 15 million and for investments upto 50% of Global Depository Receipts (GDRs) raised with the Govt's approval.

Investment from balances in EEFC accounts would be permitted by Authorised Dealers (ADs). The ceiling of US \$ 15 million is inclusive of the ceiling of US \$ 4 million under the existing fast track. Investments under the two new fast track routes would also not be subject to the obligation of neutralising investment amount through inward remittances over five years.

(c) The above liberalisation has been announced with a view to encouraging Indian corporates to globalize, and in the line with the Govt's policy to move towards capital account convertibility.

#### DGFT's Instructions to Banks

1641. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) has written to all banks seeking data and names of exporters who have failed to repatriate proceeds and bring in foreign exchange;

(b) if so, the details of the data received so far by the DGFT; and

(c) the action taken against the errant exporters?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) to (c) Recently the Central Economic Intelligence Bureau (CEIB), Ministry of Finance have reported that a number of exporters have not repatriated their export proceeds on the basis of information received by them.

DGFT have immediately issued instructions to its Regional Licensing Authorities to obtain necessary details from Regional RBI Authorities and investigate the matter for taking appropriate action.

The exporters who are found to have defaulted in repatriating their export proceeds within the time specified by the RBI, shall be liable to action, *inter alia*, under Foreign Trade (Development & Regulation) Act, 1992, as stipulated in Para 11.3 of the Export & Import Policy 1997-2002.

#### Produce of Bivoltine Silk

1642. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether JICA in Japan has selected some districts in Karnataka to produce special bivoltine silk;

(b) if so, the names of the districts selected alongwith the amount of assistance provided to produce special bivoltine silk in these districts; and

(c) the number of silk weavers likely to be benefited in these districts from the Bivoltine Sericulture Development Project Phase II of JICA, Japan in Karnataka ?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) The following four districts in Karnataka have been selected to produce special bivoltine silk under the JICA project:-

1. Mandya
2. Tumkur
3. Chitradurga
4. Hassan

Assistance to the project is provided by JICA in the form of technology transfer through the services of experts, training of Indian counter-parts/CSB staff and by providing equipments.

(c) Since the project is confined to verification of technology developed in Phase I, it is not expected to bring in additional benefits directly to the weavers at this juncture. After the verification and popularisation of the technology, high quality cocoons would be available for production of quality grade silk.

#### **Focus of Asia Society**

1643. SHRIMATI LAKSHMI PANABAKA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the three days conference on the focus of Asia society was held on March 5, 1997 in which a number of Asian countries and the Chief Executive Officers of International companies attended the Conference;

(b) if so, the main decisions taken in the Conference; and

(c) to what extent these decisions have been helpful to India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes Sir, the conference was held in New Delhi from 6-8 March, 1997.

(b) The conference, discussed, among other things, the positive aspects of the Central budget presented in February, 1997 and the optimistic prospects for the Indian economy in the 21st century. It also discussed the greater opportunities and challenges of accelerated trade liberalisation for the Asian nations, need for partnership between India and the U.S. to address persisting problems of significant dimensions, Importance of a more involved business relationship between India and China and the significance of forums like APEC. Furthermore, India's backlog in infrastructure development, the slow and inadequate financial market reforms, lack of clear policies and rigid bureaucracy was also mentioned. The conference stressed that for the reforms to be a success, there is a need to provide basic amenities to India's rural population. The role of an enhanced education system and PSU restructuring, and the need to bring down the high cost of money were additional factors mentioned in the conference.

(c) India's policy of economic reforms is giving due

emphasis on, inter alia, infrastructure development, removal of unnecessary red tapism and growth with social justice.

[Translation]

#### **Currency Branch in Bhopal**

1644. SHRI VIJAY KUMAR KHANDELWAL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have decided to open a currency department in the Bhopal branch of the Reserve Bank of India; and

(b) if so, the time by which this department is likely to start functioning?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) and (b) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have reported that it has been decided to have a fully mechanised Issue Department at Bhopal and necessary steps have been initiated. RBI have further reported that it is difficult to set time-limit for starting the Issue Department.

#### **Hindi in Bank Branches**

1645. SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of branches in the A,B,C categories of the Nationalised Banks which are operating and the number Cut of categories A & B branches which perform their 75 or 100 percent work in the Official Language i.e. Hindi or how much work they do in this language;

(b) the position of the work being carried out in Hindi in these banks of 'C' category;

(c) the number of house magazines being brought out by these banks in Hindi, English, Hindi-English and other languages and whether these banks propose to bring out the special issues of these magazines on the occasion of Golden Jubilee Year of Independence; and

(d) whether the modern gadgets in these banks are bilingual and the percentage of the work being done in the Hindi using these gadgets ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) and (b) The proforma prescribed by Deptt. of Official Language to monitor the progressive use of Hindi in banks does not contain specific column for collecting information regarding the number of branches of banks where 75 or 100 percent work is being done in Hindi. The data furnished by RBI relates to 'A', 'B' and 'C' regions for the banks as a whole. Bankwise percentage of correspondence in Hindi in regions A,B & C during the quarter ended March, 1997 is furnished in Statement-I attached.

(c) Information on magazines published by nationalised banks in region A,B, & C as provided by RBI is furnished